which loss of 387 sq. km. is due to Jhumming.

(b) Central Government have no proposal to acquire and convert these areas into reserved forests, as the power to constitute reserved forests lies with the State Governments. However, Central Government have taken following measures for protection and development of forests in North-Eastern Regions:

(i) State Governments have been requested to consider for putting a ban on felling of green trees above 1000 metres altitude.

(ii) Central Government provides financial assistance to States for development of forests, directly as well as through North-Eastern Council.

(iii) A regional office of the Ministry has been set up at Shillong to monitor cases under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and Environment Protection Act, 1986, as well as to improve coordination between Central and State Governments.

Direct train from Bhavnagar to Delhi

1949. SHRIMATI URMILA-BEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no direct train from Bhavnagar to Delhi;

(b) whether Government have considered the demand of the people of this area for a direct train made in the past; and

(c) if so, the action taken in this regard so far and by when a direct train is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) Thre is no direct train available between Bhavnagar and Delhi. However, one II sleeper class (GSCN) has been introduced between Bhavnagar and Delhi by 2999239902-9901/9924/30 w.e.f. 10.5.95.

At present, there is no proposal to introduce a direct train between Bhavnagar and Delhi.

मऊ और शाहगंज के मध्य गेज परिवर्तन

1950. **श्री मोहम्मद मसूद खानः** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे किः

(क) क्या यह सच है कि मऊ और शाहगंज के बीच गेज परिवर्तन का कार्य धन की कमी के कारण प्रगति नहीं कर सका है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) इस कार्य के लिए कितनी धनराशि जारी की गई है और इस कार्य की अनुमानित लागत कितनी है; और

(घ) इस कार्य को शीघ्र पूरा करने हेतु क्या प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं तथा इस संबन्ध में ब्यौरा क्या है?

रेल मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सतपाल महाराज): (क) जी नहीं, कार्य सुचारू रूप से चल रहा है;

(ख) प्रश्न नहीं उठता;

(ग) परियोजना की अनुमानित लागत 43.38 करोड़ रु० है जिसमें से 31.3.96 तक 17 करोड़ रु० खर्च हो गए हैं। इस कार्य के लिए बजट 96-97 में 27 करोड़ रु० की राशि आबंटित की गई है;

(घ) इस कार्य की जून, 96 तक हुई प्रगति 70% है। इस कार्य के लिए धन एवं सामग्रियां उपलब्ध करा दी गई हैं और यह कार्य 30 नवंबर, 1996 तक पूरा हो जाएगा;